A new world has emerged in 100 days

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FULL TEXT

Donald Trump completed his 100th day in office this week, but it sure felt like a lot more days than that.

The U.S. President's second term has been a tsunami of chaos, incompetence and corruption, leaving Americans and U.S. allies alike struggling to keep their heads above water and gasping to catch their breath.

Every day, there's a new outrage: an unjustified round of tariffs; a threat to annex Canada; a claim that Ukraine started the war with Russia; a conscious denial of due diligence to deportees; an attack on yet another university; retributive sanctions on yet another law firm; a court order ignored; more critical research funding threatened… Then there is the corruption –right out in the open for all to see –such as Mr. Trump selling access to business people and billionaires who invest in his family's cryptocurrency business or join his new private club.

It's a flood-the-zone strategy designed to keep opponents off-balance and normalize the abnormal, but it has been guided by the arrogant belief that the U.S. could bully other countries and none of them would dare retaliate.

Now, 100 days into it, Mr. Trump and his team are learning otherwise and discovering the limits of American power.

Countries are of course fighting back. They have hammered the U.S. with tariffs of their own. They, like Canada, are rethinking their alliances and reorganizing their economies for their own good.

Canadians and residents of other countries have taken matters into their own hands, too, cutting back on holidays to the U.S. and boycotting American goods and services.

The most tangible results of Mr. Trump's first 100 days in office have been a slowdown in trade, an 8-per-cent drop in U.S. stocks, a decrease in the value of the greenback and the irreversible erosion of America's standing.

The President has proven to be so good at being terrible he is even indirectly reordering the internal politics of other countries.

His threats against Canada's economy and sovereignty turned a sure Conservative victory into a strong Liberal minority government on Monday, thereby contributing to the continued prime-ministership of Mark Carney, a committed globalist and climate warrior –the "unTrump," as a Financial Times columnist called him.

It appears Mr. Trump's tariff madness will have the same effect on a general election in Australia this Saturday, where polls indicate that a struggling centre-left government has made a comeback and is poised to be re-elected.

In the U.S, which on Wednesday saw its economy contract in the first quarter under the weight of Mr. Trump's policies, the opposition to the President is starting to crystalize.

Democrats such as Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker and former vice-president Al Gore are bluntly calling Mr. Trump an authoritarian threat to the U.S. Constitution and calling for mass demonstrations.

The President said this week that he is just getting started, but his assault on the world order may actually be peaking. That means this is the moment when Canada and its allies in Europe and elsewhere need to continue to work together to create a new world order. They cannot make the fatal error of hoping that Mr. Trump will come to his senses on his own, or that they can limit the damage through bilateral trade deals with him.

Mr. Carney said Tuesday that he had spoken to the President and that they planned to meet soon, presumably to discuss U.S. tariffs on Canadian steel, aluminum and car parts, and Canada's retaliatory levies.

But it will do little good to temporarily forestall the worst consequences of Mr. Trump's aggression and go no further, as that would leave Canada as dependent as it was before his re-election.

The Prime Minister's critical task is to live up to his promises to make Canada's economy less reliant on trade with the U.S., to bring down internal trade barriers, to improve productivity, to strengthen the military and to build new

defence alliances.
Mr. Carney said in his victory speech that the days of an integrated market with the U.S. are over, and that it is time to move past America’s “betrayal” of its friend and ally.
That is dead right. After Mr. Trump’s first 100 days, there is no going back.

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